



MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER MONTHLY MEETING OF THE THURLES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT WHICH WAS HELD IN THE DISTRICT CHAMBER, THURLES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OFFICES, CASTLE AVENUE, THURLES ON 21st OCTOBER 2024

Present: Councillor Michael Smith, Cathaoirleach, presided.

Councillors Kay Cahill Skehan, William Kennedy, Shane Lee, Micheál Lowry, Eddie Moran, Jim Ryan, Peggy Ryan and Seán Ryan.

Also Present:

Mark Connolly	Director of Services
Kieran Malone	Senior Engineer
Thomas Duffy	District Engineer
Jim Ryan	Executive Engineer
Enda Walsh	Executive Engineer
Sharon Scully	District Administrator
Orla McDonnell	Staff Officer

Vote of Congratulations – Loughmore Castleiney GAA Club.

The Cathaoirleach opened the Meeting with a Vote of Congratulations to the Loughmore Castleiney GAA Club who were crowned double County Senior Champions in Tipperary after winning both the 2024 Tipperary Senior Hurling and Football Finals within a week.

The Members joined with the Cathaoirleach in congratulating the team on the great win; a historic third double in 11 years from a small parish, where, they stated, it was through sheer dedication, training, resilience and talent that brought them to this success.

It was proposed by the Cathaoirleach M. Smith and seconded by Councillor E. Moran that a Civic Reception be afforded to the team members.

The Members also wished the Club the best of luck in the forthcoming Munster Championship.

1.1 Disclosures/Conflicts of Interest.

There were no Disclosures/Conflicts of Interest raised at the Meeting.

2.1 Minutes of the September Monthly Meeting of Thurles MD.

It was proposed by Councillor S. Ryan, seconded by Councillor W. Kennedy and resolved:



"That the Minutes of the Thurles Municipal District September 2024 Monthly Meeting which was held on the 16th September 2024 be adopted as a true record of the business transacted at the Meeting."

3.1 Thurles Municipal District – Draft Budgetary Plan 2025.

A copy of the Thurles Municipal District Draft Budgetary Plan 2025 was circulated by email on the 10th October, 2024, giving the required 7 days' notice and was also circulated with the Agenda in accordance with Section 102(4A)(b) of the Local Government Act, 2001.

Mark Connolly outlined the Thurles Municipal District Draft Budgetary Plan for 2025 to the Members and highlighted the following: -

- General Municipal Allocation for 2025 will be €302,345 which is an increase of €90,530 on 2024.

The table below sets out the provisional allocation per District based on population.

Tipperary County Council - General Municipal Allocations (GMA) 2025 Allocated based on 2022 Population

	Population based on 2022 Census	Allocation € GMA based on 2022 Population
Carrick-on-Suir Municipal District	20,191	163,707
Clonmel Borough District	25,003	202,723
Tipperary–Cahir-Cashel Municipal District	44,532	361,063
Nenagh Municipal District	40,879	331,445
Thurles Municipal District	37,290	302,345
Total	167,895	1,361,283

It was proposed by Councillor S. Ryan, seconded by Councillor K. Cahill Skehan and resolved: -

"That pursuant to the provisions of Section 102 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, we, the Members of Thurles Municipal District, hereby adopt the overall Draft Budgetary Plan 2025 providing for an expenditure of €302,345 for the Municipal District subject to agreement on allocations to specific projects."



3.2 Consider Chief Executive's Report on Part 8 – Proposed Improvement Works at The Mill Road, Thurles.

The Chief Executive's Report on Part 8 Proposed Improvement Works at the Mill Road, Thurles was circulated to the Members in advance of the Meeting and taken as read.

The Members welcomed the proposed improvement works stating that it would make a huge difference to the area as currently the area is not safe for walkers. They acknowledged the work previously undertaken by former Councillor S. Hanafin which was key to getting this project off the ground and they raised the following queries: -

- Will the proposed works ensure that flooding in the area does not become an issue due to the works undertaken?
- Has an appropriate funding stream been identified to undertake the works?
- When are the proposed works expected to commence?

The District Engineer replied to queries as follows: -

- Flood issues in the area will be addressed during the works.
- Development Levies of €41,000 has been set aside for the project initially and funding from ORIS (Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme) will also have to be sought.
- The project will be a step-by-step process but the District will endeavour to progress it as speedily as possible.

It was proposed by Councillor J. Ryan, seconded by Councillor S. Ryan that the Chief Executive's Report on Part 8 – Proposed Improvement Works at The Mill Road, Thurles be accepted.

3.3 Attendance by Ann Marie Fleming, Biodiversity officer, Tipperary County Council

Ann Marie Fleming, Biodiversity Officer was in attendance for this item. Ann Marie circulated a Grass Management Report at the Meeting to the Members wherein she outlined the All Ireland Pollinator Plan & 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan.

Ann Marie's report outlined the benefits of changing grass management for the District and the different options available. She stated that Thurles MD must create a grass management plan for each town and an ecological network is needed.



The Members thanks Ann Marie for her report and they raised the following queries: -

- What is the grass management plan for Thurles MD for 2025?
- It is very important that public consultation on this plan takes place to ensure buy-in from the public.
- Suitable areas need to be identified for flowering meadows.
- It is important that tidy towns committees, communities and resident associations are consulted with and educated during the process of preparing the grass management plan.
- It is not sufficient that grass is simply left 'uncut'; a plan needs to be created.
- A multiplicity approach must be taken, i.e. identify those areas suitable for growing, such as approach roads, and similar areas for growing.
- Wildflower gardens can take several years to develop; meantime can there be some intervention of colour in order to bring people on board.
- Hedgerows must be included as part of the Plan and farmers must be educated.
- The need to move away from the Tidy Towns perception of a 'well mowed lawn' and the media have a role to play in this also.

Ann Marie replied to queries as follows: -

- It is important that public engagement and consultation with the various interest groups and the MD takes place.
- The identification and selection of areas for specific grass management types is vital to the plan.
- Liaison with tidy towns groups and residents' associations will be an action plan from the Biodiversity Plan which will issue next Summer.
- The perception of wildflower meadows with vibrant red and blue colours will not happen in Ireland as those 'postcard meadows' are not the natural flowers in Ireland.
- The National Biodiversity Plan advised against the introduction of wildflower seeds into a meadow. A wildflower garden will typically take 3 years to develop.

Ann Marie stated that she is looking forward to working with the Members in the creation of the Grass Management Plan for the District.

3.4 Presentation on foster Carer Recruitment by Shirley Brosnan and Jeanette Seymour, TUSLA.

Shirley Brosnan and Jeanette Seymour, TUSLA were in attendance for this item. They spoke to the Members about foster care in Ireland and outlined the following



- There is a severe lack of foster carers available for the number of children in need of the service. There are 85 foster carers in North Tipperary for 121 children – currently there are more retiring than being assessed/approved.
- It is preferable to keep the fostered child in their own area if possible.
- Foster Care Ireland are currently looking for a diverse pool of parents – there is no typical foster family, single people are also eligible to apply.
- A foster family needs to enjoy the company of children and be able to give them a secure environment.
- There are different types of foster care;
 - Emergency care – where a S.12 emergency is invoked by the Gardaí and the child is removed from its family for up to 8 days.
 - Day Fostering – where child stays at home
 - Short term care – placement with a family but child will return home. This may develop into long term care.
 - Respite care – Support for an existing carer who needs a break.
 - Supported Lodging – generally the child is aged 16/17, wants independence but needs support
- There are lots of supports available to the carer such as a social worker and peer support, training before and ongoing throughout and the provision of therapy and a medical card for the child.
- Allowance for foster parents of €400 per week for children under 12 years and €425 per week for children over 12 years

The Members raised the following queries: -

- Have the numbers of foster parents increased or decreased over the past number of years?
- Is Garda vetting a requirement for the Carers?
- Has the shortage of foster parents been advertised in the Media?
- Is there a greater demand for short term care as opposed to long term care?
- How long is long term care generally for?
- Who retains the Child Benefit payments?
- Is adoption possible for those in long term care and if so is it a complex procedure?
- Is a Council housing tenant eligible to foster a child?
- Is it traumatic for the child to move back to his family following long-term care?

Shirley and Jeanette replied to queries as follows: -

- The number of foster parents for North Tipperary is very fluid and currently stands at 85 but lots of carers are retiring. There have been 12 enquiries all year as of today.
- Garda Vetting is a requirement for the Carers and is also a requirement for all family members who are over 16 years. The vetting will be done



prior to the training and repeated every 3 years. A background check is also undertaken in the UK.

- Lots has been done nationally to try and get the message about seeking foster parents out to the public. Radio has been used as well as social media and two on-line information sessions take place per month on Tusla's website.
- Each individual will be assessed to see what type of care suits them best, usually an initial placement will be emergency, respite short term care.
- Short term is generally up to 6 months and long term is 6 months and over up to the child reaching 18 years of age.
- Child Benefit payments are retained by the child's family up to 6 months and will go to the carer after 6 months.
- Adoption is possible where a child is with a family for 3 years. The age of the child generally determines the length of the process; the younger the child the longer the process generally takes.
- Local Authorities do permit fostering to take place in a Council house.
- The Courts will often make the decision to return a child back to their home and it can sometimes be traumatic for the child and therefore long-term care tends to be a slow progression.

3.5 District Engineer's Report

An updated District Engineer's Report for the MD was circulated to the Members in advance of the Meeting and taken as read.

The Members raised the following issues: -

- Is there a regular maintenance plan for junctions and are they audited to ensure they are in order?
- Baker's Street, Thurles is in a poor state with overgrown weeds and rubbish strewn about.
- Issue of poor sightlines and no road markings at the Cloughmartin/Graigue Junction making the junction very dangerous.
- Would Thurles MD be in a position to provide funding to Thurles Tourist Office to enable them to acquire a bus that would be used to ferry tourists throughout the tourist sites in the area?
- Are the MD taking the necessary steps to ensure that there is no build-up of bon-fire material etc, and is there engagement with the local Gardaí in this regard?
- What is the update regarding the current lease on the Munster Hotel carpark which is due to expire at the end of October and do the MD have any plans to buy the building itself?
- Can development levies or GMA funding be used to implement traffic calming measures in Gortnahoe similar to those undertaken in Bohernacrusha and Ballycahill recently?



- Can the delay in the planned road improvement works on the N75 and N62 be raised at the forthcoming meeting between the TII and the Cathaoirleach?
- When will the successful applications for the Low-Cost Safety Scheme (LCSS) be announced?
- Has a date been announced yet for applications under the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS)?
- Can the District Engineer create a Members' spreadsheet on Drainage that will allow the Members to update directly those areas that they have identified with drainage issues?
- Hedging on Kearns cross, Templemore, on the right-hand side heading towards the Devil's Bit, needs to be removed as it is interfering with traffic.
- Will TCC sell the Library building in Templemore following the impending relocation of the library?
- The road surface at Railway View, Templemore near the Railway Station needs to be addressed as it is in a very poor condition.
- What is the update regarding the pedestrian Crossing on Main Street, Templemore?
- Can additional parking spaces be provided in housing estates where currently there are insufficient spaces for all residents to park?
- What is the update in relation to the infill works required at The Mall, Templemore? An Bord Pleanála are very strict with what they will permit.
- What is the update regarding the wall at Eamon Butler's public house in Templemore which was knocked down by the OPW during works?
- Is it possible to view the design submitted for Toomevara Clár funding prior to the MD Clár submission for Upperchurch and Clonakenny?
- Why is the planting on the McDonald's roundabout at Roscrea being removed?

Replies to queries raised was as follows: -

- Junctions on priority and national routes are generally maintained once per year. The MD have a schedule of junctions to be maintained and the GSSs also identify any junctions that need to be addressed
- The schedule for routine maintenance works at Baker's Street, Thurles will be checked with the GSS.
- The issue of poor sightlines and no road markings at the Cloughmartin/Graigue junction will be examined.
- Thurles MD are not in a position to provide funding to Thurles Tourist Office to enable them to acquire a tourist bus, however, the MD will advise the Tourist Office of any funding streams that may be open to them to apply for funding themselves.
- The MD generally liaise with Environment Section regarding bon-fire material and Environment Section will arrange to have the material removed



- Negotiations are currently ongoing with the landowner to extend the existing lease of the Munster Hotel carpark. The MD are currently examining the feasibility of buying the building, however, it is a complex site and no decision regarding purchase of the building can be made without a feasibility study.
- The MD have a procedure to follow before traffic calming measures can be implemented in an area and this will apply to Gortnahoe also.
- It is envisaged that the planned improvement works on the N75 will take place in Q1 2025. There is currently no update regarding planned improvement works on the N62 as no funding source has been identified.
- The successful Low-Cost Safety Schemes (LCSS) will be announced in February 2025.
- Currently no information has issued from the Department regarding the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS). There are a large number of applications for the Scheme.
- The MD can create a Members' spreadsheet on Drainage that will allow the Members to update directly those areas that they have identified with drainage issues similar to that undertaken for 2024.
- Hedging on Kearns Cross, Templemore, on the right-hand side heading towards the Devil's Bit, will be examined.
- Currently no decision has been made on the future use of the Library building in Templemore, however, TCC Property Section are currently examining it.
- The MD intend to undertake road improvements works at Railway View, Templemore and have planned to fund the scheme from Development Levies.
- The temporary pedestrian crossing in Templemore will be removed before a survey is undertaken to determine movement in the area.
- The MD currently have no plans to add additional parking spaces in housing estates.
- The MD are subject to very strict conditions on the infill options available at the Mall, Templemore based on the correspondence received from An Bord Pleanála last week. An Optioneering Report will be put out to tender to see exactly what are the choices open to the MD.
- The issue of the knocked wall at Eamon Butler's public house in Templemore will be examined by the Engineer.
- The MD will make the design submitted for Toomevara Clár funding available to the Members prior to the Clár submission for Upperchurch and Clonakenny
- The existing planting at McDonald's roundabout at Roscrea required an upgrade. New plants will be rooted and a maintenance plan will be implemented.



3.6 Update on District Project Pipeline Plan.

An updated District Project Pipeline Plan for the MD, as outlined in the table below, was circulated to the Members in advance of the Meeting and taken as read.

Project Name & Details	Next Phase Works/Actions
Liberty Square Enhancement Scheme Phase 2 - Thurles	Decision on the Part 8 at the October District Meeting. Tendering to commence Q4 2024 to procure Design Consultants to carry out detailed design. Discussions with the National URDF team will be required in 2024 once Part 8 is approved and detailed design completed to finalise the position with costings, funding requirements and Gateway/programme status.
Market Quarter - Thurles	Construction commenced in August 2024 with a programme timeline of 14 months.
Littleton Labyrinth Walkway and Cycleway - Phase 1	Finalise the licence agreement, construction works complete. Complete final snags, official opening date TBC.
Littleton Labyrinth Walkway and Cycleway - Phase 2	Identify the best routes back into the villages. Landowner approval.
Littleton Bushcraft Centre	Appointment of Consultants to carry out a Feasibility Study in progress. Feasibility Study to be completed for Q4 2024.
Templemore Town Hall Cultural and Enterprise Centre and Civic Plaza	It is planned that construction works will take 14 months to complete. Internal works complete, external works on-going. All works to be completed end of October. Official opening date TBC.
Gantly Road in Roscrea - <i>An Age Friendly Neighbourhood</i>	Brief for the engagement of a design team complete. An external design team will be procured once approval to proceed has been obtained from the funding department in Q2 2024.



Main Street Enhancement Works, Roscrea	Project charter will now be considered for the next RRFD call to fund the project. If successful under this funding stream, a brief will be prepared for Consultants to produce a new design and upgrade of Main Street and laneways, to include public realm works that will invite people to stay and enjoy the dynamic town centre and enhance safety of all users.										
Vacant Housing Units	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="663 667 1302 707">MD Awaiting receipt of keys to property</td> <td data-bbox="1302 667 1382 707">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="663 707 1302 748">At Inspections/Costings Stage</td> <td data-bbox="1302 707 1382 748">6</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="663 748 1302 788">In Progress</td> <td data-bbox="1302 748 1382 788">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="663 788 1302 828">Retrofit Works ongoing</td> <td data-bbox="1302 788 1382 828">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="663 828 1302 891">TOTAL</td> <td data-bbox="1302 828 1382 891">18</td> </tr> </table>	MD Awaiting receipt of keys to property	3	At Inspections/Costings Stage	6	In Progress	8	Retrofit Works ongoing	1	TOTAL	18
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TOTAL	18										

The Members raised the following issues: -

- The Roscrea Local Area Plan, which was adopted last year, needs to be reviewed/amended.
- What is the update regarding funding for the refurbishment works required at Thurles Skateboard Park.
- What is the update regarding the re-opening of the Source Carpark, Thurles?
- Has there been any progress regarding Phase 2 of the Littleton Labyrinth?
- What is the update regarding the official opening of the new library in Templemore?

Replies to issues raised were as follows: -

- Any request for the review or amendment of the Roscrea Local Area Plan will need to be discussed with Planning Section.
- The MD recently met with a Contractor regarding the upgrade works required at Thurles Skateboard Park and are currently awaiting on a cost estimate for the proposed works. Appropriate funding streams are currently being examined also.
- A cost estimate for the upgrade works required at the Source Carpark has been received and the MD are currently liaising with Roads Section regarding a budget.
- The MD will seek an update from Planning Section regarding the application for Phase 2 of the Littleton Labyrinth. Currently no application has been submitted.



- The library section are currently installing IT facilities in the new library building. A date for opening to the public is not yet confirmed. With regard to the official opening, contact has been made with the Department of Community and Rural Affairs regarding a date for the official opening by the Minister.

4.1 Notice of Motion.

There were no Notices of Motion received.

5.1 Correspondence.

There was no correspondence.

6.1 Votes of Sympathy/Congratulations.

Votes of Congratulations were extended to: -

- Horse and Jockey Hotel on winning the Georgina Campbell Irish Food and Hospitality Awards 2024 Business Hotel of the Year Award.
- Sean Bowen who has been named Champion Apprentice Jockey of the Year
- Durlas Óg GAA on winning the County U17A Hurling Final.
- Clonakenny GAA on winning the U13 County Championship Hurling Final.

Votes of Sympathy were extended to:

- The McCormack family on the recent passing of Pat McCormack, late of Rocker, Loughmore, Templemore. Pat's grandson was a member of the winning Loughmore-Castleiney team that won the Tipperary Senior Hurling County Final.
- The family of Joan O'Dwyer (RIP), late of Cluain na Seimre, Two-Mile-Borris. Joan was chairperson of the Two-Mile-Borris Christmas Lights Committee.
- Susan and Debbie Scally, staff of Tipperary County Council on the passing of their brother Paul Scally (RIP), late of Cabra, Thurles and retired employee of Tipperary County Council.

7.1 Any Other Business.

Councillor M. Smith requested that the Corporate Policy Group be contacted regarding the Mother and Baby Homes Redress Scheme and a fitting memorial.

The request was seconded by Councillor E. Moran and supported by all Elected Members.



Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council

Comhairle Contae
Thiobraid Árann
Oifig Cheantar Bardasach
Dhurlais, Ascaill an
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SIGNED: 
CATHAOIRLEACH

DATE: 18th November 2024

SIGNED: 
MEETINGS ADMINISTRATOR

DATE: 18th November 2024